

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A computer-implemented method for verifying at runtime an invariant property of
2 a data structure of a computer program, comprising:

3 automatically generating a first code segment that verifies a runtime value of the
4 data structure is consistent with the invariant property in response to an annotation of the
5 data structure that defines the invariant property of the data structure;

6 comparing the runtime value of the data structure with the invariant property
7 during execution of the program via execution of the first code segment; and

8 performing a programmed action if the runtime value is inconsistent with the
9 invariant property.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the invariant property is a range of data addresses
2 and further comprising verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is within a
3 range of data addresses specified in source code of the computer program.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the invariant property is a range of data addresses
2 and further comprising:

3 automatically generating during compilation a valid data address range including
4 an upper bound and a lower bound for the range of data addresses, wherein the source
5 code of the computer program does not include a specification of the upper bound and
6 lower bound; and

7 verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is within the valid data
8 address range.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the invariant property is a range of instruction
2 addresses and further comprising verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is
3 within the range of instruction addresses specified in source code of the computer
4 program.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the invariant property is a range of instruction
2 addresses and further comprising:
3 automatically generating during compilation a valid instruction address range
4 including an upper bound and a lower bound for the range of addresses, wherein the
5 source code of the computer program does not include a specification of the upper bound
6 and lower bound; and
7 verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is within the valid instruction
8 address range.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the invariant property is a range of data values and
2 further comprising the step of verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is
3 within the range of data values.

1 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising communicating the invariant property
2 from a compiler to a code generator.

1 8. The method of claim 7, further comprising storing the invariant property in a
2 symbol table.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the invariant property is a range of data addresses
2 and further comprising verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is within a
3 range of data addresses specified in source code of the computer program.

1 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the invariant property is a range of data addresses
2 and further comprising:

3 automatically generating during compilation a valid data address range including
4 an upper bound and a lower bound for the range of data addresses, wherein the source
5 code of the computer program does not include a specification of the upper bound and
6 lower bound; and

7 verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is within the valid data
8 address range.

1 11. The method of claim 8, wherein the invariant property is a range of instruction
2 addresses and further comprising verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is
3 within the range of instruction addresses specified in source code of the computer
4 program.

1 12. The method of claim 8, wherein the invariant property is a range of instruction
2 addresses and further comprising:

3 automatically generating during compilation a valid instruction address range
4 including an upper bound and a lower bound for the range of addresses, wherein the

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5 source code of the computer program does not include a specification of the upper bound
6 and lower bound; and
7 verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is within the valid instruction
8 address range.

1 13. The method of claim 8, wherein the invariant property is a range of data values and
2 further comprising the step of verifying that the runtime value of the data structure is
3 within the range of data values.

1 14. The method of claim 8, further comprising storing in the symbol table one or more
2 code addresses associated with one or more updates to the data structure.

1 15. An apparatus for verifying at runtime an invariant property of a data structure of a
2 computer program, comprising:

3 means for automatically generating a first code segment that verifies a runtime
4 value of the data structure is consistent with the invariant property in response to an
5 annotation of the data structure that defines the invariant property of the data structure;

6 means for comparing the runtime value of the data structure with the invariant
7 property during execution of the program via execution of the first code segment; and

8 means for performing a programmed action if the runtime value is inconsistent
9 with the invariant property.